PRESCRIPTION DRUG ABUSE

LEARNING OBJECTIVE

Identify the dangers of prescription drug abuse

Identify short and long term effects of prescription drug abuse

Learn Proper disposal methods for prescription drugs

The Army maintains the following principles: (AR 600-85)

Abuse of alcohol or the use of illicit drugs by both military and civilian personnel is inconsistent with Army Values, the Warrior Ethos, and the standards of performance, discipline, and readiness necessary to accomplish the Army's mission.

Army Drug Testing will identify the presence of a drug in your system. Therefore, it is incumbent upon you to ensure your prescription is current while taking medication or you can be charged with drug use.

Soldiers or Civilians in testing designated positions that test positive for these drugs will have their medic[illegible]iewed and possibly be interviewed b[illegible]eview Officer (MRO).

PRESCRIPTION DRUG ABUSE

The use of Prescription drugs:

- in ways not intended by the prescribing doctor for non-medical purposes.

Prescription drug abuse: Becoming the #1 Drug problem among young Americans.

- Nearly 7 million Americans are abusing prescription drugs*—more than the number who are abusing cocaine, heroin, hallucinogens, Ecstasy, and inhalants, combined. That 7 million was just 3.8 million in 2000, an 80 percent increase in just 6 years.

- Narcotic pain-relief prescriptions for injured U.S. troops have jumped from 30,000 a month to 50,000 since the Iraq war began, raising concerns

ILLEGAL SITUATIONS

- Possession/Use of medication without a prescription
- Giving prescription to another individual regardless of their apparent need

GUILTY?

Result- charged with distribution of a controlled substance
- subject to severe fines and jail time

The illegal use of Prescription drugs or any drug goes against Army Values and Warrior Pride

Prescription drug abuse varies from taking a friend's prescription painkiller for your backache to disrupting the time-release formula of a drug to speed up absorption by:

- crushing ground-up pills
- snorting the powder to get high
- chewing the pills
- dissolving pills in water and injecting

RISK FACTORS FOR PRESCRIPTION ABUSE

- Past or present addictions
- Chronic pain management
- Age group 18-25
- Working in a health care setting
- The belief that prescription drugs are safer

MOST COMMONLY ABUSED PRESCRIPTION DRUGS:

- OPIOIDS, which are often prescribed to treat pain.
- CENTRAL NERVOUS SYSTEM (CNS) DEPRESSANTS, which are used to treat anxiety and sleep disorders.
- STIMULANTS, which are prescribed to treat the sleep disorder narcolepsy and attention-deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD).

OPIOIDS- most often prescribed to treat pain.

The following medications are referred to as prescription narcotics:

a. Morphine- (e.g., **MS contin, kadian, and avinza**)-used before and after surgical procedures to alleviate severe pain

b. Codeine- treat mild pain, cough suppressant, or diarrhea

c. Oxycodone- (e.g., **oxycontin, percodan, and percocet**) treat moderate to severe chronic pain

d. Hydrocodone -(e.g. **vicodin, lortab, and**

OPIOID SYMPTOMS OF USE OR ABUSE:

Constipation

Depression

Low blood pressure

Decreased respiration rate

Confusion

DANGERS OF OPIOID ABUSE

- Increased risk of choking
- Loss of menstrual periods and fertility
- Severe respiratory depression or death following a large single dose

***Opioid painkillers cause more drug overdose deaths than cocaine and heroin combined!**

CENTRAL NERVOUS SYSTEM (CNS) DEPRESSANTS- most often prescribed to treat anxiety and sleep disorders

Sedatives and Tranquilizers:

a. Barbiturates (**mebaral and nembutal**)- for anxiety, tension, and sleep disorders

b. Benzodiazepines (**valium, xanax, prosom**)- for anxiety, acute stress reactions, panic attacks, and short-term treatment of sleep

c. Newer Sleep medications (e.g., **ambien, sonata, and lunesta**)

SEDATIVES AND TRANQUILIZERS
SPECIFIC SYMPTOMS OF USE OR ABUSE:

- Impaired judgment
- Confusion
- Drowsiness
- Unsteady walking pattern
- Involuntary and rapid movement of the eyeball

DANGERS OF SEDATIVES AND TRANQUILIZER ABUSE

- Memory problems
- Abnormal temperature regulation
- Seizures following a rebound in brain activity after reducing or discontinuing use
- Overdose can cause coma or death

STIMULANTS

Prescribed to treat sleep disorders and attention-deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD)

a. Dextroamphetamine (e.g., **dexadrine and adderall**)

b. Methylphenidate (e.g., **ritalin and concerta**)

STIMULANTS
SPECIFIC SYMPTOMS OF USE OR ABUSE

- Weight loss
- Agitation
- Irregular heartbeat
- Insomnia
- High blood pressure
- Irritability

DANGERS OF PRESCRIPTION STIMULANT ABUSE

- Hallucinations
- Cardiovascular failure
- Lethal seizures
- Increased risk of stroke
- Tremors

Watch for Signs & Symptoms of prescription drug abuse

Constricted pupils, nausea and vomiting, and respiratory depression.

Anxiety and delusions, flushed skin, and chest pain with heart palpitations.

Slurred speech, dizziness, and respiratory depression.

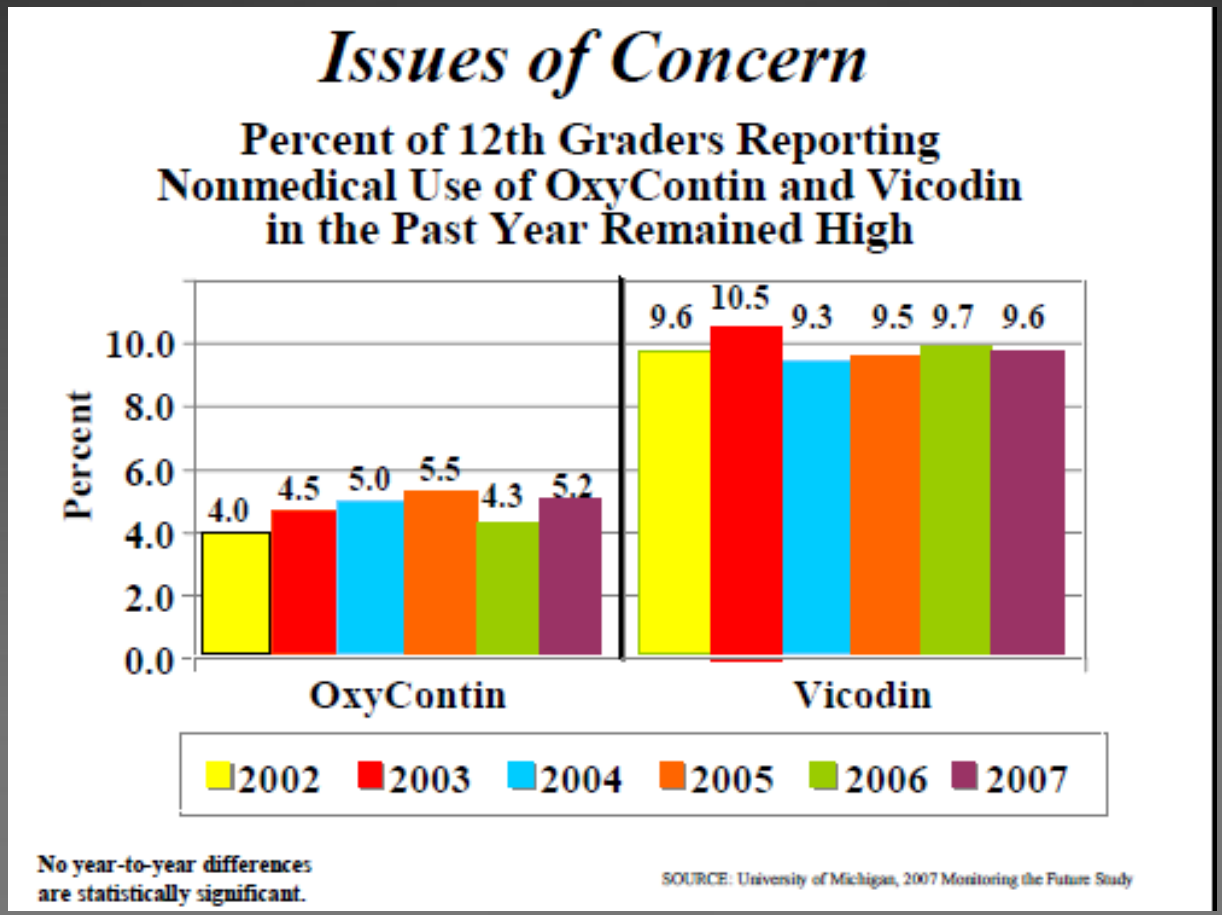
WARNING SIGNS 0f Prescription DRUG ABUSE

- Constantly "losing" prescriptions, so more prescriptions must be written
- Seeking prescriptions from more than one doctor
- Taking higher doses despite warnings
- Stealing, forging, or selling prescriptions
- Excessive mood swings

METHODS OF ACQUIRING PRESCRIPTION DRUGS FOR ABUSE INCLUDE:

- doctor-shopping prescription
- traditional drug-dealing
- theft from pharmacies
- illicitly acquiring
- drugs via the Internet
- from friends or relatives
- From YOUR medicine cabinet or home

Adolescent Rx Abuse



Most Commonly Abused Classes of Rx Drugs by Adolescents

- Opiods, Such as Oxycontin and Vicodin
- CNS depressants, such as Valium and Xanax
- Stimulants, used to treat certain sleep disorders and ADHD which include drugs such as Ritalin and Adderall

OTC drugs such as cough and cold remedies are also being abused….. DXM (dextromethorphan)

DXM Street Terms

Candy
C-C-C
Dex
DM
Drex
Red Devils
Robo
Rojo
Skittles
Tussin
Velvet
Vitamin D.

Street Names for DX
Abuse:

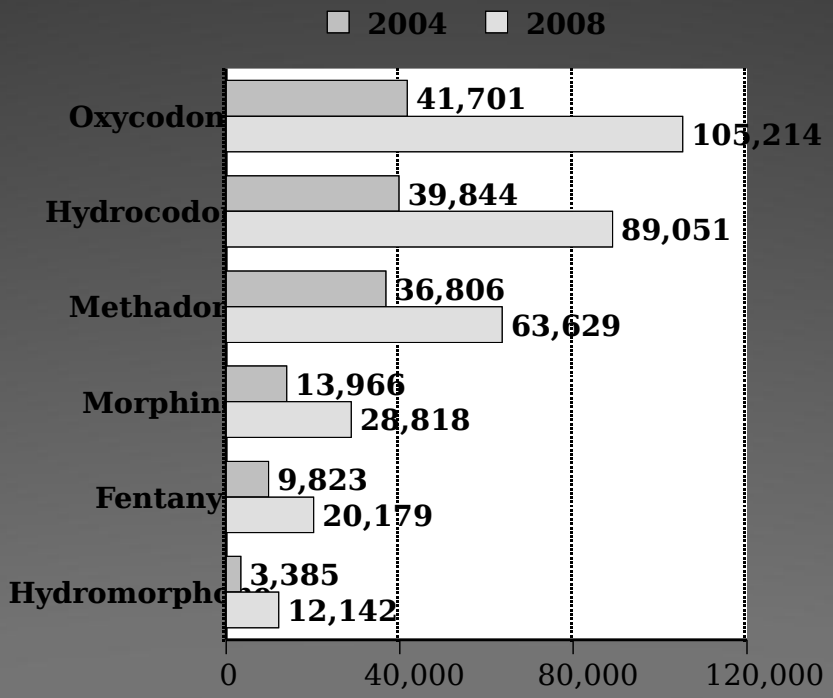
Dexing
Robotripping
Robodosing

Biggest Dangers of Rx Abuse For **Anyone**

Addiction or Deat

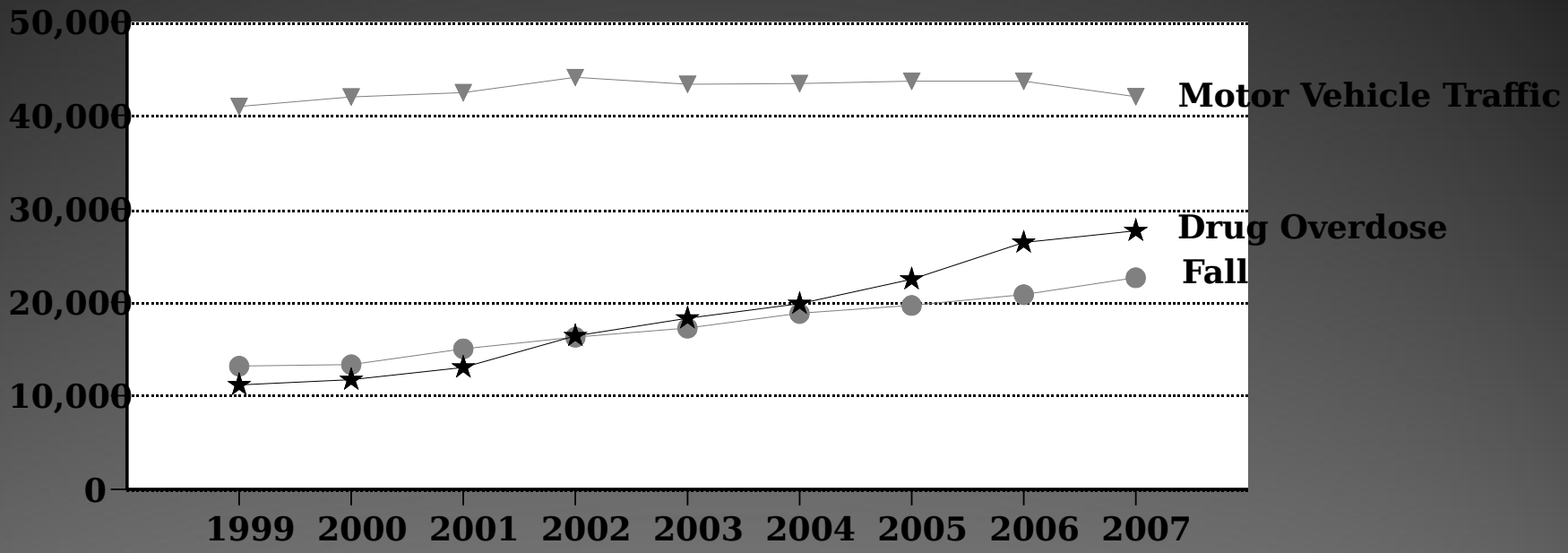
Addiction --a chronic, relapsing disease characterized by compulsive drug seeking and abuse **despite** its known
harmful consequences.

Estimated Number of Emergency Department (ED) Visits Involving the Nonmedical Use of Narcotic Pain Relievers, 2004 and 2008*



(ED) visits involving the nonmedical use of narcotic pain relievers increased from 144,644 in 2004 to 305,885 in 2008.

Number of Deaths from Unintentional Injuries in the United States, by Top Three Causes, 1999-2007



- Estimated 37,485 Americans died from drug-related causes in 2009, double the rate of 10 years ago, according to a recent LA Times article.
- Study quotes that traffic-related fatalities decreased by more than one-third since the early 1970s, to 36,284 in 2009.

Other Dangers

- Injuries to self and others
- Fights, falls, drownings
- Impaired driving crashes

HELPFUL TIPS

- Always follow medication directions carefully.
- Don't increase or decrease doses without talking with your doctor.
- Don't stop taking medication on your own.
- Don't crush or break pills unless directed by a physician.
- Be clear about the drug's effects on driving and other daily tasks.
- Learn about the drug's potential interactions with alcohol, other prescription medicines, and over-the-counter medicines.
- Inform your doctor about your past history of substance abuse.
- Keep medications locked up (someone may be abusing Rx that you're not aware of)
- Don't use other people's prescription medications and don't share yours.
- Remember prescriptions are only good for a 6 month time frame now.

Federal Guidelines for Proper Disposal of Rx Drugs *

- Take unused, unneeded, or expired Rx drugs out of their original containers and throw them in the trash
- Mix Rx drugs with an undesirable substance, such as used coffee grounds or kitty litter and put them in impermeable, non descript containers such as empty cans or sealable bags, will further ensure the drugs are not d
- Flush Rx drugs down the toilet only if the label or accompanying Pt informa specifically instructs doing so
- Take advantage of community pharmaceutical take-back programs that allo the public to bring unused drugs to a central location for proper disposal

*Federal Drug Administration guidelines March 2010

Federal Guidelines Continued

The FDA advises that the following drugs be flushed down the toilet instead of thrown in the trash:

Actiq, oral transmucosal lozenge
Avinza, capsules (extended release
Daytrana, transdermal patch system
Demerol, tablets
Demerol, oral solution
Diastat/Diastat AcuDial, rectal gel
Dilaudid, tablets
Dilaudid, oral liquid
Dolophine Hydrochloride, tablets
Duragesic, patch (extended release)
Embeda, capsules (extended release)
Exalgo, tablets (extended release)
Fentora, tablets (buccal)
Kadian, capsules (extended release)
Methadone Hydrochloride, oral solution (immediate release)
Morphine Sulfate, tablets
Methadose, tablets
Morphine Sulfate, oral solution
MS Contin, tablets (extended release)
Onsolis, soluble film (buccal)
Opana, tablets (immediate release)
Opana ER, tablets (extended release)
Oramorph SR, tablets (sustained release)
Oxycontin, tablets (extended release)
Percocet, tablets
Percodan, tablets
Xyrem, oral solution

Note: Patients should always refer to printed material accompanying their medication for specific instructions.

***List revised March 2010**

If you require additional information about Prescription drug abuse or any other drug, contact the Ft Gordon Army Substance Abuse Program at 202 7th Avenue, Bldg 38702, (706) 791-5797 / 7148, or visit the Army Center for Substance Abuse Programs website at www.acsap.army.mil. or the National Institute on Drug Abuse at www.drugabuse.gov

WARRIOR

Personal Courage: Possess the Personal Courage not to use drugs or abuse alcohol and to notify the Chain of Command of Soldiers that do.

Respect: Show your Respect to the Army, your unit, fellow Soldiers, and yourself by staying drug free and drinking responsibly.

Integrity: Stay true to the Army Values and Warrior Ethos by supporting the Army's drug and alcohol policies.

Duty: Do your duty as a Soldier and stay mentally and physically tough by not using drugs or abusing alcohol.

Excellence: Exhibit honorable behavior on and off duty - don't be a substance abuser!